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In addition to the enlisted men, the corps consisted of the captains—and Clark's slave, York. York was big, very dark, strong, agile, a natural athlete. About Clark's age or a bit younger, he had been Clark's lifelong companion, bequeathed to him by his father, whose companion had in turn been York's father.

Lewis's relations with Clark were excellent, as always. He borrowed money from Clark regularly. On one occasion he recorded in his account book, "Borrowed of Genl. Clrk this sum [\$1] at a card party in my room." On another occasion he borrowed \$6, which he then loaned to his brother, Reuben. On October 7, it was \$50 for an unstated purpose. On October 28, Clark loaned him \$49.50 for two barrels of whiskey."

In August, when one of Clark's slaves ran away, Lewis gave York \$4 for his expenses as he searched for the man. That indicates a high level of trust in York, but nevertheless Clark was upset with York.

York was demanding his freedom as his reward for his services on the expedition. His wife belonged to someone else and lived in Louisville, Kentucky. When Clark refused to free him, York asked to be allowed to go to Louisville. Clark agreed to send him there, but only for a visit. In a November 9, 1808, letter to his brother Jonathan, Clark explained that he would "send York and permit him to Stay a few weeks with his wife, he wishes to Stay there altogether and hire himself [a fairly common practice; York was proposing to hire himself out and send the money his labor earned to Clark] which I have refused. he prefers being Sold to return[ing] here, [but] he is Serviceable to me at this place, and I am determined not to Sell him, to gratify him, and have dertected him to return . . . to this place, this fall. if any attempt is made by York to run off, or refuse to proform his duty as a Slave, I wish him Sent to New Orleans and sold, or hired out to Some Sevare Master untill he thinks better of Such Conduct. I do not wish him to know my determination if he conducts himself well."

York continued to argue that he should be set free. Clark lamented to his brother, "I did wish to do well by him [York], but as he has got Such a notion about freedom and his emence Services [on the expedition], that I do not expect he will be of much Service to me again."

Clark fretted over the situation. He discussed it with Lewis. In a late-1808 letter to his brother, Clark wrote, "I do not ceare for Yorks being in this Country. I have got a little displeas'd with him and intended to have punished him but Govr. Lewis has insisted on my only hiring him out in Kentucky which perhaps will be best." Clark hoped that York would learn a lesson from "a Severe Master" and thus "give over that wife of his" to return to St. Louis.

York was not the only slave causing Clark problems. He wrote Jonathan that he was often "much vexed & perplexed with my few negrows," so much so that he had been forced to chastise them and was considering selling all but four, not only to relieve the frustration of dealing with them but to obtain badly needed money. Still, he was troubled by his temptation to sell. "I wish I was near enough to Council with you a little on this Subject will you write a few lines about this inclination of mine to turn negrows into goods & cash."

In May 1809, York returned to St. Louis. "York brought my horse," Clark wrote, "he is here but of very little Service to me, insolent and sulky, I gave him a Severe trouncing the other Day and he has much mended."³⁴

No commentary is necessary. Much of the evil of slavery is encapsulated in this little story—not least Jefferson's realism about the effect of slavery on the morals and manners of the slaveholder. York had helped pole Clark's keelboat, paddled his canoe, hunted for his meat, made his fire, had shown he was prepared to sacrifice his life to save Clark's, crossed the continent and returned with his childhood companion, only to be beaten because he was insolent and sulky and denied not only his freedom but his wife and, we may suppose, children.

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Ambrose, Stephen E.

Undaunted courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the opening of the American West. Stephen E. Ambrose.

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Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Lewis, Meriwether, 1774-1809. 2. Lewis

1801-1809. 1801-1809. 3. Clark